The Myrtle

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13.

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His Mother's Songs.

BENEATH the hot midsummer sun
The men had marched all day;
And now beside a rippling stream
Upon the grass they lay.

Tiring of games and idle jests,
As swept the hours along,
They called to one who mused apart,
"Come, friend, give us a song."

"I fear I cannot please," he said;
"The only songs I know
Are those my mother used to sing
For me long years ago."

"Sing one of those," a rough voice cried,
"There's none but true men here;
To every mother's son of us
A mother's songs are dear."

Then sweetly rose the singer's voice
Amid unwonted calm,
"*Am I a soldier of the cross,*
A follower of the Lamb?

"*And shall I fear to own His cause!*"—
The very stream was stilled,
And hearts that never throbbed with fear
With tender thoughts were filled.

Ended the song; the singer said,
As to his feet he rose,
"Thanks to you all, my friends; good-night.
God grant us sweet repose"—*Sel.*

To-Day.

To-day is the summit
Of duty and life,
The path of endeavor,
The arena of strife.

To-day is ours only;
Work, work while you may;
There *is* no to-morrow,
But only to-day.

An "Intender."

I SHALL not pretend to tell how many figures there were across the slate. If you have ever puzzled over long examples, as Hervey was doing over one which had kept him busy, without result, for an hour, you may, perhaps sympathize with him.

Hervey now frowned at the figures, over at the gold-fish in the globe, and up at the frescoed ceiling over his head. He gave a weary sigh, drew a long, idle, discontented breath. Then he started up and bent over the slate, and multiplied, and divided, and did all that the puzzling example required, until the last figure was down as it should be, and he leaned back with a gay little whistle, and a pleasant face.

Aunt Edith roused up from her nap, and looked to see what the boy was doing. Likely she was thinking to herself, "Whistling as usual, instead of working;" but she only closed her eyes again, and Hervey came and stood beside her, folding his arms in a resolute fashion, and looking—well, not exactly like the usual Hervey.

"Auntie," he said, glancing rather at the floor than at Aunt Edith's face, lighted up with a loving smile, which belonged to Aunt Edith herself, and nobody else, "Auntie, it is mean and miserable to be an intender."

"A what, dear?" inqnired Aunt Edith, not understanding.

"An intender."

"And what is an intender?" inquired Aunt Edith again.

"An intender is somebody who means to do things, and does not do them."

"What kind of things?"

"All kinds of right things."

Poor Hervey! How sorry Aunt Edith was over him every day! He intended to be early at breakfast; he intended to say his verse before eating, punctually and promptly; he intended to be diligent at school, patient with his schoolmates, observant of rules; he intended to be studious at study hour, obedient at all times. No one ever heard Hervey refuse to do right, but—auntie could not help knowing that Hervey himself was an intender.

"To do is better than to intend to do, dear," replied Aunt Edith, a little sadly.

"You do not say an intender is mean and horrid, because you know I am one."

"You are young; you do seem likely to be an 'intender,' but I have faith in you to believe that you will be a doer."

"What makes you think so, Aunt Edith? I disappoint you every day."

"I think so because you are not happy as an intender, and because you cannot honorably serve our dear Father, and be anything else than a doer.

"But, Aunt Edith, it is so hard to keep doing, and I don't keep on." Hervey half stamped his foot with the last words. He was so in earnest.

"No, you do not keep on."

"Then what makes you think I ever will?"

"It is impossible to love our Father, and not do his will."

"But—maybe I do not love him." Hervey's eyes were bent to the floor, and his lip quivered as he added: "How you believe in me!" straightening up again, and folding his arms tighter over his breast.

"Yes, I believe in you," said Aunt Edith; "you will not continue to be an intender."

"I have made you a great many promises; if I could think of them half the time, I would keep them. Do you think I ever will get to remember them better?"

"Oh, yes, I am very sure of it."

"Do you know, Aunt Edith, I cannot see how you can be sure of anything about me, except that I am a miserable intender."

Aunt Edith was looking on the floor; she did not raise her eyes; she seemed to be in deep thought.

"How do you think I will get out of it all?" inquired Hervey, still standing with his arms crossed, and a resolution showing in the whole boy, which Aunt Edith had prayed for every day, but had never seen before.

"Out of what, dear?" she inquired, with one of her loving smiles, which told, without words, how dear he was to her.

"Out of all the 'intender' business."

"You will start by remembering one promise better; and after you have practiced on that awhile, you will remember another."

"What else?"

"You will overcome one troublesome habit, and then you will overcome another, and so on until you get to be a doer."

"I would like to be one all at once."

"A tree never grew to be a tree in one night; an 'intender' never grew to be a doer in one day."

"But I can try."

"By all means try to do right every minute of every day, but do not be discouraged if you only get along slowly for awhile."

"And you think I can be a 'doer'?"

"I never said so." Aunt Edith smiled at his puzzled face. "I said you would not continue to be an intender."

"Tell me how to begin; how to start to get out of it all.'

"Are you ready to really begin?"

"I think so, Aunt Edith."

"Hang your clothes in the closet when you retire presently, instead of casting them upon the floor, and arise in the morning at the first call; pour the water from your basin after bathing, and leave nothing about your room which you should put away."

"But, Aunt Edith, that is such a funny place to begin; tell me some greater thing to do."

"We will come to greater things after awhile. Starting the day correctly has a great influence upon our ways all day long. You will, at night, feel the benefit of having begun in this funny place."

"But, Aunt Edith, tell me more things."

"Keep to these things strictly and perfectly for one week, and then tell me if the very effort to try to do them has not helped you to overcome something else which you may think to be more important."

"Then you will give me something else to try over?"

"Yes, if you wish, but the days themselves and your own conscience will soon show you something else to try over."

"I never yet got much farther than the promise; but really, Aunt Edith, I always have meant it when I said it."

"Yes, but you did not mean it earnestly enough."

"I wish I could get made clear over again."

"There is nothing to hinder your habits being made over again."

"I mean they shall be, Aunt Edith."

"Then begin with the little things, one at a time every day. After a little while, the right way will be the established habit, and it will be no more trouble to you then to do right, than it is now to do wrong."

Hervey gave her a new, earnest, manly look, which she carried in her remembrance many days. It meant a promise unlike the usual promises which Hervey had given, and she knew that he would not continue an "intender," because love to God and manly resolution are all that are required to make any boy a doer.—*N. Y. Observer.*

"You'll Swear Without Me."

Several boys in the upper part of New York were playing with their tops, and one of the number, feeling chagrined at his inability to come up to the mark of his playmates, began to swear roundly.

A Sunday school boy promptly said: "Johnnie, if you swear I won't play with you."

Johnnie very earnestly answered: "I don't care, and I'll swear as much as I've a mind to."

Willie said: "Well, you'll swear without me," and picking up his tops he put them into his pocket, and moved on for home.

Johnnie saw Willie would do as he said, and, feeling somewhat ashamed of his conduct, called out, "Willie, if you'll come back and play I won't swear any more."

Willie came back, and saying, "Johnnie, my Sunday school teacher says swearing is very wicked and wrong, and I dare not play with any boy who is wicked," resumed his play.

This was a little hero who was not afraid to stand up like a brave soldier for the cause of pure speech and right morals, and in obedience to the commands of God.—*Sel.*

In a world of unceasing change it is a great consolation to have an unchanging and unchangeable faith in the goodness and greatness of God. Empires may perish and thrones crumble, but our God changeth not.—*Cumberland Presbyterian.*

For the Myrtle.

The Old Farm House.

FLORENCE BOWEN.

The old farm-house on the hill-side
Has sadly gone to decay.
The frolic and fun I enjoyed there
Are fresh in my memory to-day.

Pure joy has come once in my life time;
When young, I was happy and gay,
When through the green fields and the meadows
I roamed all the long summer day.

The shade-trees stand just as majestic
As they stood in the days of my youth,
And the brook, as it babbles and sparkles
Tells still its sweet story of truth.

The wood-bine now crept to the house-top
Looks down on the green of the hill,
To see if the friends it began with
Are striving to struggle up still.

And the seats in the broad-spreading locusts
All still in their places remain,
As they were when they rested and sheltered,
Our youth from the sunshine and rain.

And thus as these scenes of my childhood
Before my dim vision shall play.
They will lighten the cares and the burdens
That rest on my spirit to-day.

A True Duck Story.

Here was a duck who loved her home.

A family kept fowls of all kinds and many ducks and geese. The only son, whose special care they were, had gone into the navy, and was expected home soon on a vacation. The folks at home were carefully fatting one duck especially for Sam's dinner. Sam came home but could not stay. His vessel was ordered out again at once, but he said: "I'll take the duck and after a few days have him cooked on the ship." So the duck was taken in a basket on board ship. Several weeks passed, and one morning the duck was on the doorstep at home. He was not inclined to move much, and seemed tired. After a while came a letter from Sam, and he wrote: "I have lost my duck. I fed him myself so as to be sure of him, but he is gone and I am sorry, for he would not be able to fly so far, and has probably drowned."—*Riverside.*

If one only wished to be happy, this could be readily accomplished; but we wish to be happier than other people; and this is almost always difficult, for we believe others to be happier than they are.

For the Myrtle.

Sharing Blessings.

WHEN Henry Macgregor
Went out for the day,
To enjoy in the sunshine
A real picnic-play.

His thought was not wholly
Fixed on his own joy ;
For he knew how God loves
A benevolent boy.

While his mother and father
Aunt Kate, and young Nell,
Were enjoying their lunch
In the leaf-shaded dell.

He wandered away down the
Long sunny road,
And came to a cot ;
A poor shepherd's abode.

Where one lonely child
Poorly dressed, and worse fed,
Sat crying in want
Without fire, without bread.

He followed a noble heart's
Impulse, at least,
When he led the poor child
To take part in the feast.

E. M. B.

Rebuking a King.

The timidity which hesitates to rebuke profanity was once shamed by a king. Riding along the highway in disguise, and seeing a soldier at an inn, he stopped and asked him to drink ale with him. On an oath which the king uttered while they were drinking, the soldier remarked:

"I'll pay for part of the ale, if you please, and go; for I so hate swearing that, if you were the king himself, I should tell you of it."

"Should you, indeed?" asked the king.

"I should," was the emphatic reply of his subject.

Not long after the king gave him an opportunity to be "as good as his word." Having invited some lords to dine with him, he sent for the soldier, and bade him stand near him in order to serve him if he was needed. Presently the king, not now in disguise, uttered an oath. And deferentially the soldier immediately said: "Should not my lord and king fear an oath?"

Looking at the heroic soldier and then at his company of obsequious noblemen, the king severely remarked: "There, my lords, is an honest man. He can respectfully remind me of the great sin of swearing; but you can sit here and let me stain my soul by swearing, and not so much as tell me of it!"—*Sel.*

A Gentleman.

Let no boy think he is to be made a gentleman by the clothes he wears, the horse he rides, the stick he carries, the dog that trots after him, the house he lives in, or the money he spends. Not one of all these things do it; and yet every boy may be a gentleman. He may wear an old hat, cheap clothes, live in a poor house, and spend but little money. But how? By being true, manly, and honorable; by keeping himself neat and respectable; by being civil and courteous; by respecting himself and respecting others; and finally, and above all, by fearing God.

BEAR ye one another's burdens.

Curious Atonement.

THE baboon is a very cunning creature. It really seems as if it sometimes reasoned about events that are going on about it.

We were reading the other day about a cook leaving the kitchen for a few moments after the dinner was nearly ready for the table.

The baboon, who was a great pet with his master, was left alone in the room, and, being tempted by the savor coming from the pot where a chicken had been cooked, he lifted the lid, and very deftly pulled out the fowl, and ate it.

When this was done, he began to think that he had been wrong, and would be punished for it, when his trick was discovered. So he slipped

out of the kitchen, and ran through the garden into the field beyond.

Here he found a large flock of crows feeding. It seemed at once to strike him that if he could catch one of these crows, he might substitute it for the chicken he had stolen.

The crow was soon caught and the baboon stole stealthily back into the kitchen, lifted the lid of the pot and dropped the crow in, bodily.

Here it was found, when the cook was ready to serve her dinner, and the surprise of the family may be imagined when they sat down to the table without their chicken, giving dolorous glances at the side table where, on the platter, lay the crow with its shining wet black feathers.

E. M. B.

The Toy Noah's Ark.

This toy is so very common, and sold at such a trifling price, that, I dare say, there are not many of our little readers who have not, some time or other, been the happy possessor of a wooden Noah's family and a large number of wooden animals. It is great amusement to arrange these minute animals in pairs, and make a procession marching into the ark.

I presume our young friends have often wondered, when amusing themselves with this toy, how so many animals could be made so cheaply. But it is the mode of manufacture that renders them so cheap. Now, if a person were to whittle them all out with a knife, I do not think that it would be a very profitable business. They are manufactured principally in Saxony. A block of wood is put into a lathe and turned into a circle, which looks like a circular picture-frame or moulding. If any of you were to see this "circle," I am sure you could never guess what it was made for.

After the circles are turned they are cut up into cross sections of the proper width with a fine-toothed saw, each piece or section cut off making an animal. The angles or corners are then rounded or smoothed up with a sharp knife. The tail, horns, ears, etc., as the case may be, are attached afterwards, as they could not be turned on the animal conveniently. They are then painted, when they are ready for sale. Of course each circle makes only one kind of an animal. For instance, a circle is turned for an elephant, one for a lamb, one for a cow, etc. The wood used is the common white deal.—*Sel.*

Wade Hampton's Crow.

The story is as follows, and the authority is Senator Wade Hampton, of North Carolina:

Gen. Hampton tells me that while on his Mississippi plantation he saw a tame crow that could laugh and talk.

The bird would say, "Hello!" "How are you?" and several other things of like import.

It was the most wonderful raven since the days of Barnaby Rudge and Edgar Poe. One morning a vast number of crows assembled in a tree on the plantation, and prepared for a pow-wow.

The tame bird flew among them, and saluted the congregation with a brisk—

"Hello! How are you?"

His astonished brethren scattered as if they had been fired upon with a howitzer.

This marvellous fowl of the air was to have been taken to the New Orleans exhibition, but its sudden disappearance prevented.

Gen. Hampton surmises that some negro shot him by mistake.

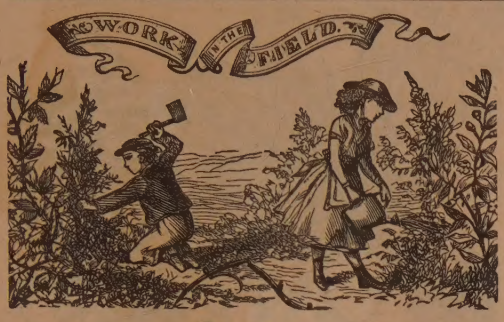
The raven's is not the first case of learning that has altered social conditions.—*Youth's Companion.*

Visiting the Lonely.

A colporteur of the Board of Publication while in Michigan came to a shanty in which was an old man of eighty-five years living alone. The only way to admit the light was through a hole in the door. The only chair in the shanty was offered to the visitor, who had to stand some time before he could see where to go. This man had a Bible in which he firmly believed. He had no other reading of any kind. Some tracts were given him, which he said he would keep till warm weather, when he could sit outside and read them. How Christ-like a work it is to seek these lonely and wandering sheep, and to take to them the messages of love from the "Good Shepherd," who "gave his life for his sheep!"

An old lady in North Haven, Connecticut, celebrated her hundredth birthday. She says that she remembers being fined ten shillings by a magistrate, when a girl, for whispering just once in church to a girl in front of her that there was a spot on her dress.

You will notice that those folks who know most, are the listeners, that they may learn more.



Sermon.

The triumphing of the wicked is short and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment.—*Job* 20. 5.

"I have thought a great deal since coming from church this morning of the sermon that I heard and I really think that it will do me good," said Lucy.

"What was it about? Mary asked.

"It was about hypocrisy and I am sure it must have set every person in the congregation thinkIng."

"Thinking of what their sins?"

"Yes, of their sins and follies. Our minister said that it was both foolish and wicked to be a hypocrite."

"I see where the wickedness comes in, but I am not so clear that a hypocrite is a fool."

"That seems the clearest part of it to me."

"I don't see how you can say so. It seems to me that it takes a pretty keen witted person to deceive."

"It may take some wit to play the tricks wherewith they attempt to deceive others. But the folly is in the fact that their triumph is so short lived. A true act will stand on its own firm foundation and will need no effort to keep it from falling. But an untrue one must be bolstered up on all sides and then it must be watched all the time lest the foundation slip from under it. Persons who are trying to seem other than they are, will be in con stant fear of being found out, and their lives will be one succession of deceits which will but poorly cover one another.

They must know this at the beginning if they have read the Bible, or listened to the teaching of those who have had experience with the ways of this world.

Our minister told a story which will remind us of the folly of seeming to be what we are not, as long as we remember it, and I am sure I shall remember it a long time. He said there were two short-sighted men in China, Ching and Chang, who were always quarrelling as to which of them could see farther. As they had heard there was to be a tablet erected at the gate of a neighboring temple, they determined they would visit it together on a given day, and put the visual powers of each to the test. But, desiring to take advantage of the other, Ching went immediately to the temple alone, and, standing quite close to the tablet, saw an inscription with the words, "To the great man of the past and the future." Chang also went soon afterward, peering yet closer, and, in addition to the inscription, "To the great man of the past and future," read in smaller characters, "This tablet is raised by the family of Ling in honor of the great man.'

On the day appointed for the contest, standing at a distance which neither could read, Ching exclaimed: "The inscription reads, 'To the great man of the past and the future.'"

"True," said Chang; "but you have left out a part of the inscription, which I can read but you cannot, and which is written in small letters, 'Raised by the family of Ling in honor of the great man.'"

"There is no such inscription," said Ching.

"There is," said Chang.

So they waxed wroth, and, after much abusing each other, agreed to refer the matter to the high-priest of the temple. He heard their story, and then said, quietly, "Gentlemen, there is no tablet to read; it was taken inside the temple yesterday."

Ching and Chang were both served right. They were a precious pair of hypocrites. They could not see half so well as they pretended.

Our Sunday Schools.

MASSACHUSETTS.

There is new and great life in the Saugus Sunday school.

Grove Hall Sunday school recently celebrated its ninth anniversary. This school rejoices in prosperity.

From the report of the Executive Committee, given at the Massachusetts Universalist Convention, we learn that the membership in our Sunday schools is 593 over last year. There are 2000 teachers employed each Sunday. The schools are prospering, and we have reason to rejoice and go forward, knowing as we do, that in these schools we are developing the church for the next generation.

At West Hingham we have a small Sunday school in which a few faithful people are interested, and are working for it with their might.

Mrs. Longley the Superintendent has proposed to the children that they each give five cents every first Sunday of the month, and that the accumulating fund be put at interest for the benefit of the school.

A lady whose liberality is well known in all our churches, has consented to hold this money for the school, and as she already donates ten copies of the MYRTLE for their benefit they rejoice in her friendship and are striving to prove themselves worthy of it.

NEW YORK.

There is renewed interest in the Sunday school at Webster.

PENNSYLVANIA.

The Sunday school Association of the Church of the Messiah Philadelphia, vote to divide the collection of $23.33 which was taken at the summer services conducted by the Sunday school of that Church, according to the recommendation of the General Convention viz. One quarter to the General Convention, one quarter to the State Convention, and the balance to the State Fund.

The summer meetings were so prosperous, that in future summers the like experiment may be repeated.

ONTARIO.

Our school under the efficient management of Mrs. Gracie is now prospering.

HARVEST PAGE.

Hidden Seed

177. — ENIGMA.

I am composed of 29 letters.
My 1, 2, 5, 14 is solitary.
My 9, 18, 17 is used in writing.
My 11, 8, 7 grows on a tree.
My 13, 6, 24 is not cold.
My 15, 16, 22 is to conquer.
My 5, 3, 6, 4 is a cozy corner.
My 12, 10, 9 is a boy's plaything.
My 20, 21, 19 is to cut.
My 26, 25, 22 is the opposite of righteousness.
My 27, 28, 29 is a color.
My 24, 23, 18 is to fasten.
My 22, 23, 17, 18 is a number.
My 12, 14, 11 is a number.
My 2, 5, 14 is a number.
My 7, 15, 10 is a number.
My 24, 13, 27, 28, 21 is a number.
My whole is one of the Bible sayings on Temperance.
Beth.

178. — ANAGRAM.

Fedned het opor dan atfrehsels od sujicet ot het falcifdet dan endey.

177. — ENIGMA.

I am composed of 25 letters.
My 1, 2, 13, 13 is the opposite of ill.
My 5, 4, 21, 14 is certain.
My 8, 9, 10, 5, 6 is to have confidence in.
My 11, 4, 7, 25 is a strong wind.
My 15, 16, 17, 3 is shape.
My 12, 20, 3 is a precious stone.
My 19, 22, 18 is to strike.
My 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 is the opposite of wrong.
My whole is a good motto. *Henry S. Jones.*

180. — DIAMOND PUZZLE.

A consonant: Fashion: Intonations in speaking or reading: Most extreme length: Necessities: To query: A consonant. *Ruth Benson.*

WINTER EVENING AMUSEMENTS.

"HOT BOILED BEANS."

In this game some small article is to be hidden, the player who has to find it being sent out of the room while the hiding is being effected. This being done, the invitation, "Hot Boiled Beans and Bacon, make haste and come to supper," is given, upon which the searcher returns to the room and begins to hunt for the hidden article. The progress of the player is usually announced by assuring him that he is "very cold," "cold," "warmer," "warm," "hot," "very hot," or "burning," according as he is far from or near to the article to be discovered.

173.—ENIGMA.

Abstain from all appearance of evil.

174. — ANAGRAM.

Honesty is the best policy.

175. — DROP LETTER PUZZLE.

The Lord is just.

176. — DIAMOND PUZZLE.

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In the November number of the *Wide Awake*, there is an Operetta for Christmas Eve. Words by Mrs. A. G. Lewis and Music by George R. Lewis.

As some of our schools may wish to use this at their Christmas Festivals, we take this opportunity to commend it to their notice, and add that it may be ordered from the Publishing House at 25 cents a copy.

OUR HARVESTERS.

Clara Boynton, 6; Frank Partridge, 6; Mercy Towne, 6: Isabel H. Taylor, 5; M. Gertie White, 3; Laura S. Macneal, 4; Annie G. Davidson, 2.

CONUNDRUM.

Why are there strictly speaking only 325 days in the the year? Because 40 of them are *lent* (Lent) and never returned.

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